

Amendment to the Claims:

The claims under examination in this application, including their current status and changes made in this paper, are respectfully presented.

1 – 4 (canceled).

5 (currently amended). The method of claim 1, ~~wherein the reacting of the nucleophilic molecule with the reactive group displaces the reactive group from the compound, so that the 27, wherein the reacting step results in a coating comprises in the form of~~ a monolayer.

6 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~27~~, wherein the oxidized surface is selected from the group consisting of: metals, semimetals, transition metals, ceramics, alloys thereof, and any combination thereof.

7 (canceled).

8 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~27, further comprising X wherein the second constituent is~~ selected from the group consisting of: esters, amides, organic acids, phenolates, thiolates, phosphonates, and any combinations thereof.

9 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~27~~, wherein the nucleophilic molecule is selected from the group consisting of: alcohols, amines, carboxylic acid, phenols, thiols, phosphonic acids, and any combinations thereof.

10 (canceled).

11 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~27~~, wherein ~~A~~ the first constituent comprises Si.

12 (previously presented). The method of claim 11, wherein the active species comprises  $\text{Si}(\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3)_4$  and the nucleophilic molecule comprises an alcohol.

13 – 21 (canceled).

22 (currently amended). The method of claim ~~13~~ 27, ~~further comprising wherein the reacting the nucleophilic molecule with the reactive group step is performed~~ at a temperature above an environmental temperature to which the coating is expected to be exposed.

23 – 26 (canceled).

27 (new). A method of passivating an oxidized surface, comprising the steps of:

applying an active species comprising a compound of a first constituent and a second constituent to the oxidized surface, the first constituent being a metal, semimetal, transition metal, or a ceramic, and the second constituent being a reactive group, so that the first constituent covalently bonds with the oxidized surface and the reactive group is exposed; and

then reacting a nucleophilic molecule with the exposed reactive group to displace the reactive group, and to covalently bond the nucleophilic molecule with the first constituent.

28 (new). The method of claim 27, wherein the applying step is performed by vapor phase deposition.

29 (new). The method of claim 27, wherein the compound of the active species further comprises an inert substituent.

30 (new). The method of claim 27, wherein the applying step is performed by a high vacuum system.

31 (new). The method of claim 27, wherein the reacting step comprises flooding the surface with the nucleophilic molecule in large excess.

32 (new). The method of claim 12, wherein the alcohol is a long chain organic alcohol.

33 (new). The method of claim 12, wherein the applying step is performed at a temperature from 180° C to 220° C.

34 (new). The method of claim 33, wherein the applying step is performed by delivering the compound in the vapor phase under reduced pressure.

35 (new). The method of claim 12, wherein the second constituent comprises ethoxy groups.